

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAIRO 15434 201344Z  
ACTION SS-25

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O 201337Z JUN 78  
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T CAIRO 15434

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR EG IS  
SUBJECT: FURTHER COMMENTS BY FONMIN KAMEL ON ISRAELI  
- RESPONSE

REF: CAIRO 15357 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: FONMIN KAMEL REITERATES GOE DISAPPOINTMENT AT ISRAELI RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS, SHARES WEIZMAN'S REPORTED VIEW IT MAY LEAD TO NEW ME WAR, AND CONTENTS ONLY HOPE NOW IS FOR USG PUT FORWARD PROPOSAL OF ITS OWN. END SUMMARY.

2. AT FONMIN KAMEL'S RECEPTION LAST EVENING FOR DEPARTING MFA UNDER SECRETARY, KAMEL TOOK ME ASIDE TO TELL ME ABOUT SHAZLI INCIDENT (CAIRO 15385). HE THEN MADE A FEW ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON ISRAELI RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS.

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3. FIRST, HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD HAD TO TELL THE WAITING PRESS ABOUT GOE DISAPPOINTMENT WITH ISRAELI RESPONSE. HE HAD TRIED TO DO SO IN AS RESTRAINED A MANNER AS POSSIBLE AND HAD INDICATED GOE WAS CONSULTING WITH USG ON SITUATION (CAIRO 15426). FAILURE ON PART GOE TO STIGMATIZE ISRAELI RESPONSE FOR WHAT IT IS WOULD BE MISUNDERSTOOD AT HOME AND ABROAD. EGYPTIANS AND OTHER

ARABS WOULD VIEW IT AS SIGN OF EGYPTIAN UNRELIABILITY AND WEAKNESS. ISRAELIS WOULD SEE IT AS EGYPTIAN ACQUISITION. INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO THE PRESS TO BE RESTRAINED, BUT GOE CANNOT ASK THE PRESS TO REFRAIN FROM EXPRESSING EGYPTIAN DISPLEASURE AND BITTERNESS WITH LATEST ISRAELI PERFORMANCE.

4. THE PROBLEM, KAMEL NOTED, IS BEGIN. ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER IS OBSESSED WITH ISRAEL'S BIBLICAL CLAIM TO WEST BANK AND IS TOTALLY INTRANSIGENT. KAMEL NOTED EMPHASIS PLACED IN SAUNDERS' TESTIMONY TO HIRC AND IN AHERTON'S LAST SPEECH TO OBTAINING POSITIVE ISRAELI RESPONSES TO OUR QUESTIONS. EVEN WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT OUR APPEALS TO ISRAELIS FOR SUCH POSITIVE RESPONSES HAVE BORNE NO FRUIT. HE UNDERSTOOD OUR DESIRE KEEP NEGOTIATIONS GOING AND INDEED GOE SHARES THIS VIEW. HE HOPED, HOWEVER, THAT USG WILL NOT TRY TO CHARACTERIZE ISRAELI RESPONSE. AS IN ANY WAY POSITIVE. DOING SO WILL UNDERCUT USG CREDIBILITY IN EGYPT AND ARAB WORLD. GOE WANTS USG TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS, BUT NOT ON FALSE PREMISE THAT ISRAELI RESPONSE HAS ADDED SOMETHING NEW OR POSITIVE TO THE PROCESS.

5. KAMEL SAID GOE'S SOLE HOPE NOW IS FOR EARLY USG PROPOSAL. WITHOUT THIS PEACE PROCESS WILL BE INDEFINITELY FROZEN AND AREA SITUATION WILL DETERIORATE. IN THIS SECRET

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CONNECTION, KAMEL MENTIONED REPORTED STATEMENT BY WEIZMAN ON LEAVING KNESSET THAT HE WAS DOING SO TO PREPARE ARMY FOR THE INEVITABLE WAR THAT ISRAELI RESPONSE WILL BRING ABOUT. KAMEL CONTENDED WITH GREAT SERIOUSNESS THAT, UNLESS USG INTERVENES WITH PROPOSALS OF ITS OWN, WEIZMAN'S PREDICTION IS LIKELY TO COME TRUE.

6. I TOLD KAMEL THAT WE UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE GOE CONCERN. WE ALSO APPRECIATE RESTRAINT GOE HAS SHOWN IN PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ISRAELI RESPONSE. ON THE SURFACE, ISRAELI RESPONSE SEEMS LESS THAN WE HAD HOPED FOR, BUT AS HE KNEW WE ARE SEEKING CLARIFICATION ON SEVERAL POINTS AND HOPE TO BE IN TOUCH WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS. MEANTIME, I THOUGHT HE COULD BE ASSURED THAT USG WILL DO EVERYTHING THAT IT CAN TO KEEP THE PEACE PROCESS GOING WITH A VIEW ULTIMATELY TO ACHIEVING POSITIVE RESULTS. I HOPED THAT WE COULD CONTINUE TO COUNT ON HIM AND OTHER RESPONSIBLE GOE MINISTERS TO HANDLE WITH COOLNESS AND RESTRAINT ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT DIPLOMATIC AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS THAT ISRAELI RESPONSE POSES FOR EGYPT. THIS IS A TIME FOR ALL OF US TO KEEP OUR COOL. ELTS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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